DC
BATMAN: REBORN
BATWOMAN in
DETECTIVE COMICS
854
AUG 2009
GREG RUCKA
J.H. WILLIAMS III
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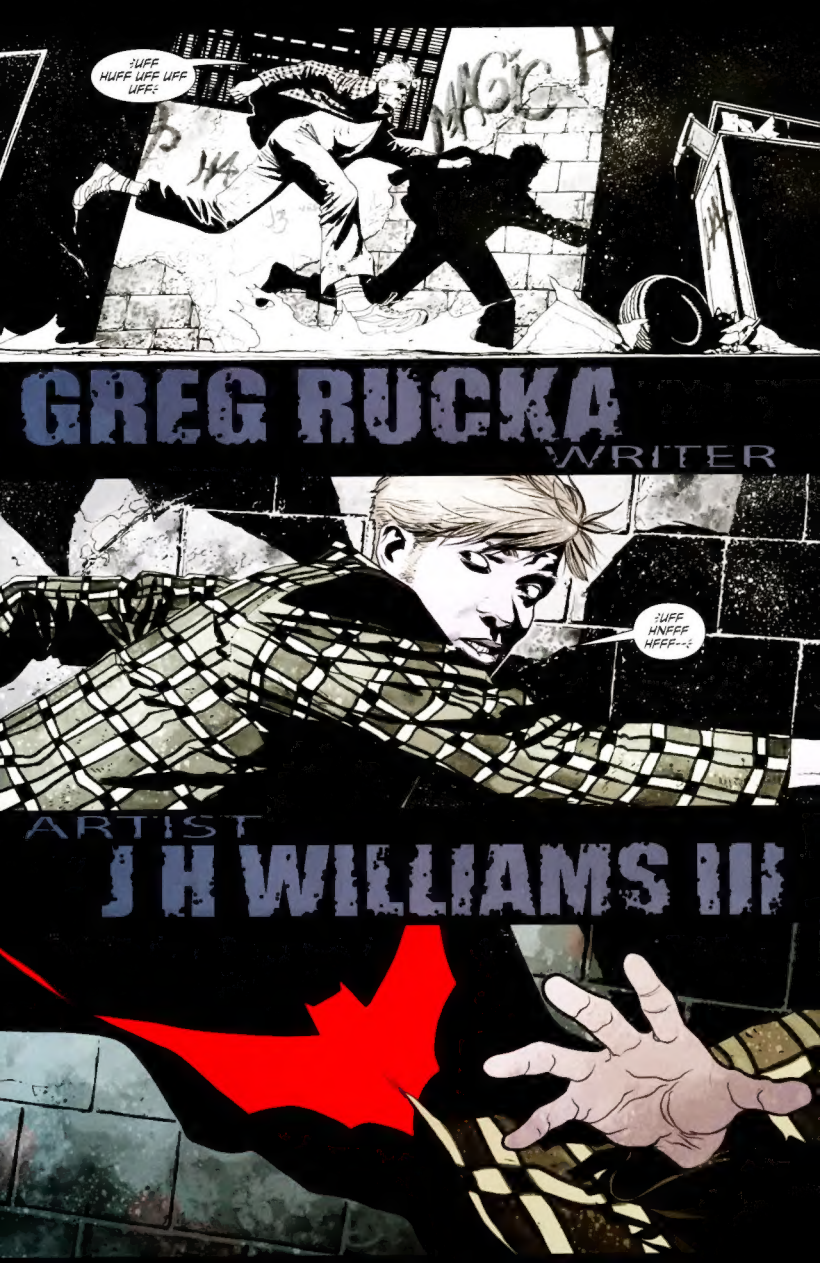
SECOND FEATURE
The QUESTION


:UFF HUFF UFF UFF UFF:
GREG RUCKA
WRITER
:UFF HNFFF HFFF--:
ARTIST
J H WILLIAMS III

AH NO... NO NO NO PLEASE, NOT YOU--
--WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!?!
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!?!
YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT, RUSH...
...I WANT YOUR SECRETS.
I WANT WHERE AND I WANT WHEN.
I WANT HER NAME.
ELEGY
PART ONE
AGITATO

DAVE STEWART: colors TODD KLEIN: letters HARVEY RICHARDS: asst. ed. MICHAEL SIGLAIN: editor J.G. JONES: variant cover Batman created by Bob Kane

AND YOU...
...REALLY...
...WANT TO GIVE IT TO ME.
PLEASE...
I DON'T KNOW. THEY DON'T TELL ME...
...I JUST KNOW THAT SHE'S COMING...
...SHE'LL BE HERE SOON...
...I CAN'T TALK TO YOU. THEY'LL KILL ME IF I TELL YOU ANYTHING.
THEY WON'T.
YOU DON'T KNOW. THEY WILL...
NO.
I WON'T LET THEM.

TELL ME, RUSH...
...WHISPER IT IN MY EAR...
WONDERED WHEN YOU'D SHOW YOURSELF.

HE GAVE IT UP.
WHAT LITTLE HE COULD.
ALL TWELVE COVENS HAVE INCREASED ACTIVITY IN THE PAST THREE WEEKS.
YOU KNOW WHY.
THEY'VE SEEN THE WHITE SMOKE.
IT'S TAKEN A YEAR AND A HALF, BUT THEIR RELIGION OF CRIME HAS A NEW LEADER.
SHE'S COMING TO GOTHAM.
THERE ARE THIRTEEN COVENS IN GOTHAM, ACTUALLY.

THIS ONE'S YOURS.
I'LL BE WATCHING IF YOU NEED HELP.
DO SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR HAIR.
ONE PULL, THE FIGHT'S OVER FOR YOU.
PFFT
I'LL TAKE IT UNDER ADVISEMENT.

MORNING GLORY!
ANNA!
$3.99 BREAKFAST SPECIAL
Jill's S
YOU'RE LATE.
YEAH, I'M SORRY. I OVERSLEPT.
SOME OF US HAVE JOBS, YOU KNOW...
...I'VE GOT TO BE IN COURT IN AN HOUR.
GOOD EATS!
I SAID I WAS SORRY.
AND DON'T TELL ME YOU OVERSLEPT, BECAUSE JUST LOOKING AT YOU IT'S OBVIOUS THAT YOU HAVEN'T GONE TO SLEEP IN THE FIRST PLACE.
YOU WILL ALSO NOTE, PLEASE, THAT I DID NOT SAY "GONE TO BED."
I HAD A LATE NIGHT.
OH, IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE CALLING HER?

I WASN'T--
I TOLD YOU WHEN MALLORY INTRODUCED US THAT I WAS LOOKING FOR A SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP, AND YOU AGREED TO THAT, YOU SAID YOU WANTED STABILITY.
BUT INSTEAD YOU'RE OUT AT ALL HOURS TOMCATTING AROUND.
I SHOULD'VE KNOWN YOU WERE USING ME AS A REBOUND.
IT'S MY OWN FAULT. I SHOULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH ANYONE SO PRIVILEGED. YOU TAKE EVERYONE FOR GRANTED.
CLANK
THAT'S NOT FAIR, THAT'S--
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT.
FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING YOU COULD SAY THAT WOULD CHANGE THINGS.
THE THING THAT KILLS ME IS THAT I LIKE YOU, KATE. I REALLY DO.
YOU'RE SMART, YOU'RE SEXY, YOU'VE GOT A SENSE OF HUMOR, AND YOU DON'T THINK FABRICS BEGIN AND END WITH FLANNEL.
BUT IT'S PRETTY CLEAR YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN GETTING SERIOUS, AND I'M WAY PAST PLAYING THE FIELD.
CALL ME WHEN YOU'VE DECIDED TO GROW UP.

--ABOUT YOUR HAIR.
ONE PULL, THE FIGHT'S OVER :SKKSSHHS:
:SKKRSHH: --WE'VE COVENS HAVE INCREASED THEIR ACTIVITY IN THE LAST THREE WEEKS. YOU KNOW WHY.
KATHERINE.
LONG PAST REVEILLE.
DON'T START WITH ME, POP. I ALREADY GOT IT FROM ANNA AT BREAK-FAST.
PREPARING THE AFTER-ACTION REPORT, COLONEL?
I THINK OF IT AS DUE DILIGENCE IN THE INTEL DEPART-MENT.
WHO WERE YOU TALKING TO?
HMM?
TRANSCRIPT TIME OH-FOUR-FORTY-TWO HOURS. SUIT GPS PUTS YOU JUST NORTH OF TRICORNER, AT LAKE STREET. JUST AFTER YOU QUESTIONED RUSH.
WHO WERE YOU TALKING TO?
THAT, SIR, WAS THE BATMAN.
DARKSEIDS WITCH
the DUSTED BUNNIES
ALL RIGHT, I'LL BITE. HE AS HIGH SPEED AS THEY SAY?
HIGH SPEED, LOW DRAG, ALL THE WAY, SIR.
:NHN:
USMC
:HNN:
:NHN:

:NHN:
YOU ALL RIGHT?
JUST MINOR DISCOMFORT..
...NOTHING I CAN'T TAKE.
YOU KEEP PUSHING, YOU'RE GOING TO HURT YOURSELF AGAIN.
MAYBE BAD ENOUGH THAT THIS TIME YOU DON'T RECOVER FROM IT.
HELL, YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY RECOVERED NOW. YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO BE.
I'M DOING WHAT YOU TAUGHT ME.
I'M SOLDIERING ON.
YOU WERE STABBED THROUGH THE HEART, KATE!
IT'S A MIRACLE YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!
DO YOU THINK I'VE FORGOTTEN?

DO YOU REALLY IMAGINE A DAY CAN GO BY WHEN I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT THOSE BASTARDS DID TO ME?
THAT I DON'T REMEMBER HOW IT FELT TO BE DRUGGED AND SCARED AND HELPLESS?
IT WAS LIKE IT WAS HAPPENING ALL OVER AGAIN.
I THOUGHT...
...GOD HELP ME, THERE WERE TIMES I THOUGHT I COULD HEAR THEM, POP.
LIKE THEY WERE RIGHT BESIDE ME AGAIN. .
WE SOLDIER ON.
COME HERE, I GOT YOU SOMETHING.

B-TEAM TRIED THESE OUT IN SOUTHERN MISUNDERSTANDISTAN LAST WEEK.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL ME WHERE THEY WERE DEPLOYED?
I AM NOT, AND YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO ASK, YOUNG LADY.
RESULTS WERE MIXED, AND RANGE IS LIMITED TO ROUGHLY SIXTY FEET.
BUT IT'S QUIET AS A SPIDER WALKING ITS WEB, AND ACCURATE AS HELL WITHIN PARAMETERS.
WHAT'S THE LOAD?
TEN SHOTS. CARTRIDGE CHARGED. YOU CAN GET TWENTY SHOTS PER, BUT THE LAST COUPLE SUFFER FOR THE DREGS.
THINK YOU CAN USE IT?
NOT ONLY THAT, SIR, I KNOW JUST WHO TO USE IT ON.
YOUR MOTHER AND I--
STEPMOTHER
--WERE HOPING YOU'D JOIN US TONIGHT.
BETTE'S IN TOWN, SHE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU.
NO CAN DO, COLONEL. YOU HEARD THE TRANSCRIPT, YOU KNOW WHAT RUSH TOLD ME.
THE RELIGION OF CRIME HAS A NEW LEADER, SHE ARRIVES IN GOTHAM TONIGHT. ALL THIRTEEN COVEN LEADERS WILL BE OUT TO GREET HER.
LAST TIME THEY HAD A LEADER, HE HAD ME ABDUCTED AND TRIED TO CARVE OUT MY HEART.
WHY? WHY ARE THEY OBSESSED WITH YOU?
I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T KNOW WHY I MATTER TO THEM.
BUT I'M SURE AS HELL NOT GOING TO LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN.
IT'S TIME I GOT SOME ANSWERS.

I ALREADY KNOW WHERE.
BUT WHAT I DON'T KNOW IS WHO.
I ALREADY KNOW WHEN
AND I REALLY DO WANT TO KNOW.
YOU MIGHT EVEN SAY THAT I NEED TO KNOW.
NAMES HAVE POWER.
YOU FEAR MINE.
I WANT HERS.
AND AT LEAST ONE OF YOU IS GOING TO TELL ME.
NEPHILIM

I DON'T THINK I'M ASKING FOR THAT MUCH, HONESTLY.
YOU'VE ALL TAKEN SUCH AN INTEREST IN MY AFFAIRS...
...DON'T YOU THINK IT ONLY FAIR THAT I TAKE AN INTEREST IN YOURS?
TELL ME HER NAME.
How dreadfully savage!
You ought to be ashamed of yourself, a great girl like you to go on crying in this way!
Stop this moment, I tell you!
I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, because I'm not myself, you see.
THE BELLE OF THE BALL ARRIVES.
YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING YOUR FOLLOWERS WAITING.
My name is Alice, so please your majesty.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU.
Stuff and nonsense! The idea of having your sentence first!
WHATEVER.
To be continued...

GNHHH!
<WHAT DO YOU THINK?>
<I THINK HE GOT THE MESSAGE.>
<YOU GOT THE MESSAGE, DIDN'T YOU, HECTOR?>
<SHE'S GONE, HECTOR...>
<...FORGET ABOUT HER.>
PIPELINE
CHAPTER ONE / PART ONE

ding
ding
You have 79 new messages
:SIGH:
GOOD MORNING, RENEE.
GOOD MORNING, TOT.
HOW MANY DID WE GET?
EIGHTY. ALL WHAT WE'VE COME TO EXPECT. A QUARTER OF THEM ASKED WHERE THEIR CAR KEYS HAVE GONE...
...EIGHT WONDER ABOUT THE MEANING OF LIFE...
...AND TWO MORE WANT TO KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE LINDBERGH BABY.
AND SOMEONE IS ASKING TO KNOW THE AIRSPEED VELOCITY OF AN UNLADEN SWALLOW.
AFRICAN OR EUROPEAN?
HE DID NOT SPECIFY.
ding
...RENEE? TAKE A LOOK.
SEND THE RESPONSE.

Happy Burrito

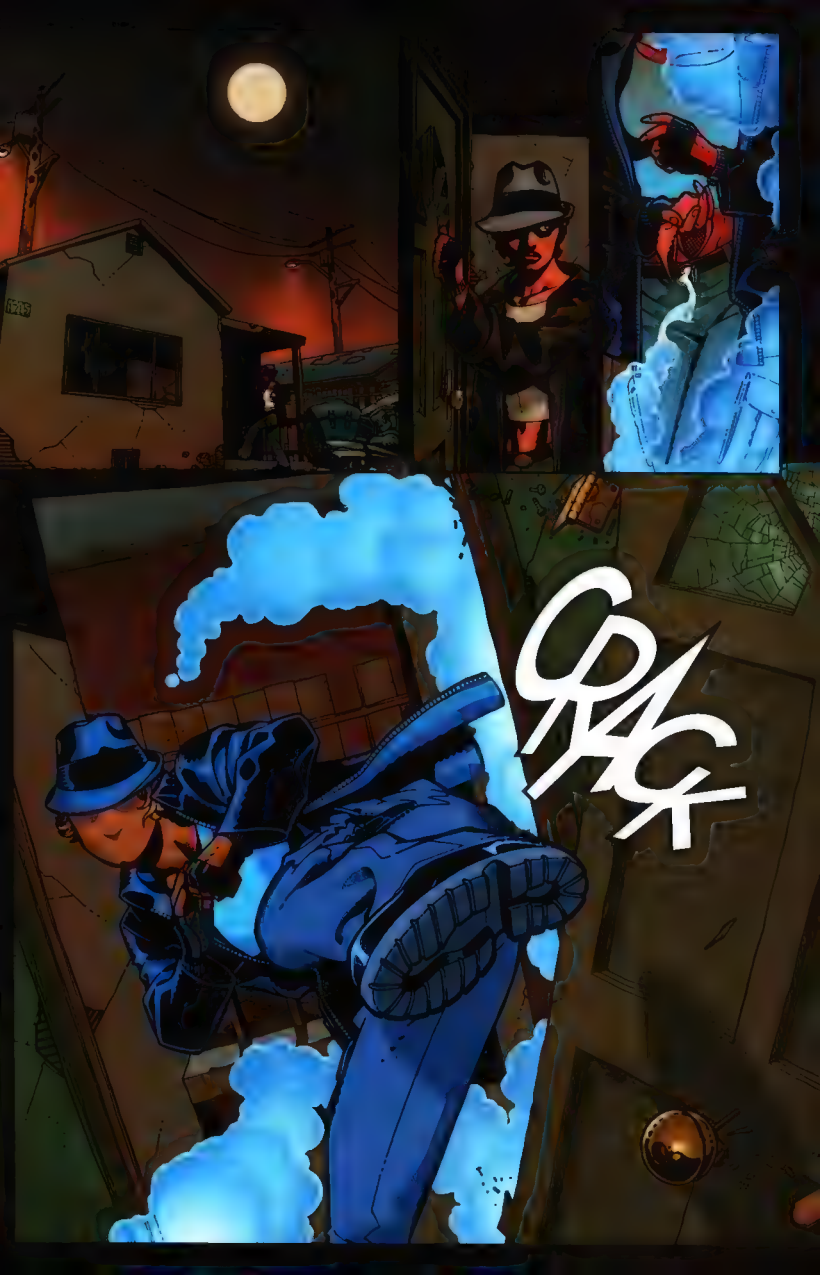
YOU'RE THE WOMAN WITH THE HAT? FROM THE WEBSITE?
THAT'S RIGHT. HECTOR SOLIZ?
YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME?
(THAT'S WHAT I DO.)
(HAVE A SEAT, HECTOR.)

(LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY DOESN'T LIKE YOU VERY MUCH.)
(THE PEOPLE WHO DID THIS... IT WAS THEIR WAY OF TELLING ME TO STOP ASKING QUESTIONS.)

(BUT I CAN'T. IT'S MY SISTER. COULD YOU, IF IT WAS YOUR BABY SISTER?)
(I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHERE SHE IS, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER.)

(START AT THE BEGINNING.)

(HER NAME'S LOUISA. SHE'S SEVENTEEN.)
(WE'RE FROM CULIACAN. YOU KNOW CULIACAN? WHERE THE GANGS AND THE POLICE MURDER EACH OTHER FOR DRUGS.)
(THERE WAS NO FUTURE THERE.)
(TWO YEARS AGO, I PAID A MAN TO SMUGGLE ME ACROSS THE BORDER, TO THIS COUNTRY.)
(HIS NAME IS VARGA.)
(IN JANUARY, OUR PARENTS WERE MURDERED, KILLED IN A CROSSFIRE.)
(LOUISA WAS ALONE. I MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS, SENT HER THE MONEY TO COME HERE.)
(SHE NEVER ARRIVED.)
(I WENT TO VARGA. HE TOLD ME SHE NEVER MADE THE TRIP.)
(THEN THE LETTER CAME. LOUISA SAID VARGA WAS TAKING HER TO CALIFORNIA, THAT SHE WOULD SEE ME SOON.)
(I WENT BACK TO VARGA, SHOWED IT TO HIM. HE TOLD ME TO FORGET ABOUT HER, THAT SHE WAS GONE.)
(THEN HIS MEN BEAT ME.)
WHERE CAN I FIND VARGA?


CRACK

BAD DOG.

...KNEW YOU COULD HACK THEIR DATABASE, TOT, I JUST DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE *FLUENT* IN SPANISH...
...YEAH, THAT MATCHES WHAT I FOUND...
...WHICH PRETTY MUCH *CONFIRMS* HECTOR'S STORY, THAT LOUISA MADE IT ALL THE WAY TO L.A....
...UH, TOT? I'M GONNA HAVE TO CALL YOU BACK...
...SOMETHING'S COME UP.

In an attempt to keep up with current communication trends like blogging, texting and twittering we're trying out a new messaging system here on the DC Nation page. For the first time we are using "Magic Egg" as a way of reaching out to our fans. It's pretty cool – like micro blogging but with a more dairy-centric approach. This week the Magic Egg wants you to know that we have an amazing new creative team coming on board JSA starting with issue #29. Please welcome the most excellent Bill Willingham (Fables) and Matt Sturges (Blue Beetle, RUN!!). These guys are a perfect match for JSA and plan on bringing the ruckus early in their first arc. In fact, I just counted 40 characters in issue #29 and about half of them are bad guys, so you know stuff is going to explode. Also please welcome the amazing talent of artist Jesus Merino, who not only illustrates an amazing JSA (as you can see from this page) but also provided us with this week's Magic Egg. Make sure you are there for the start of a new era with JSA #29!

– Ian Sattler, Senior Story Editor DCU via Magic Egg

DC NATION

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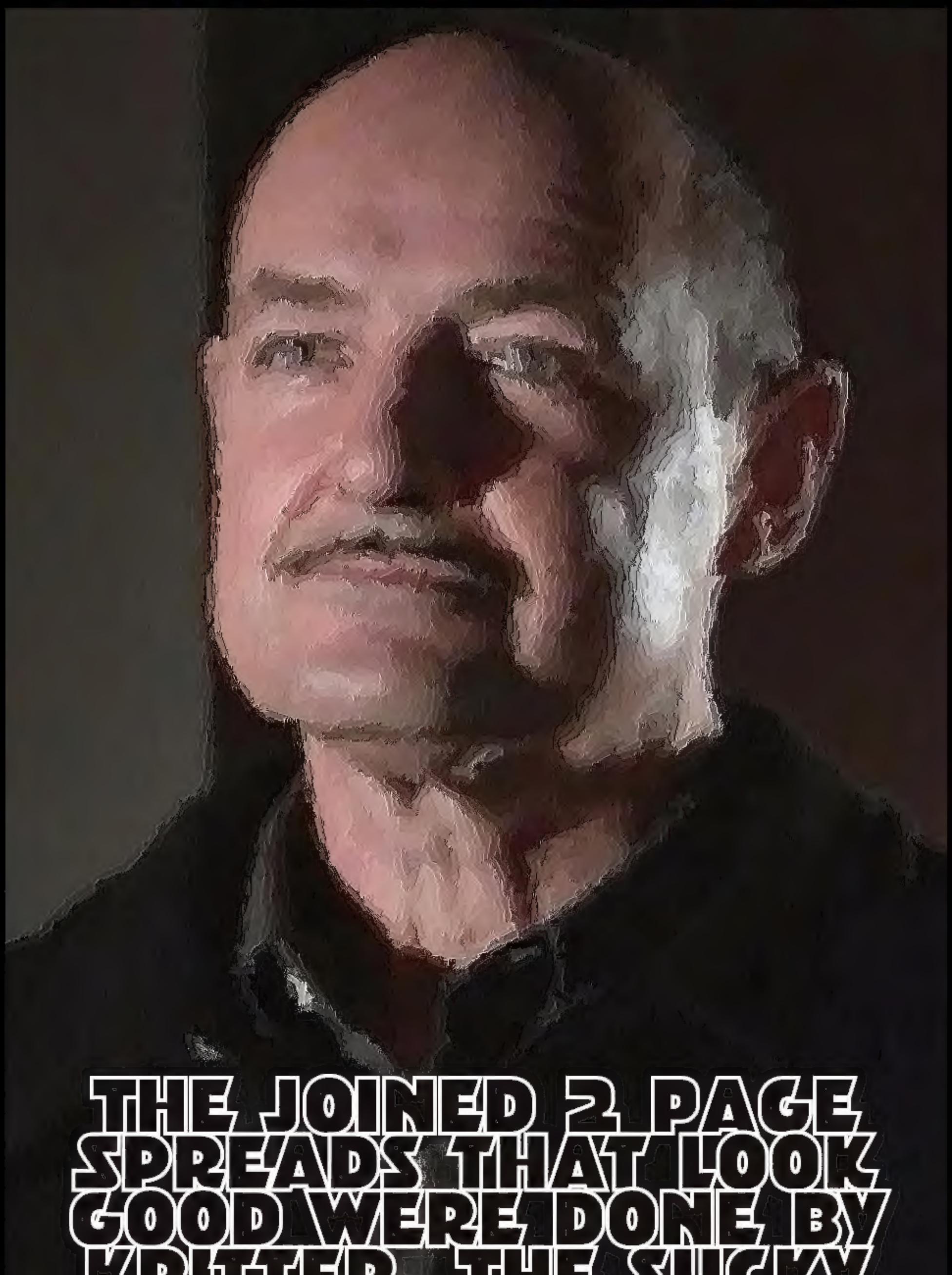

THE JOINED 2 PAGE SPREADS THAT LOOK GOOD WERE DONE BY KRITTER. THE SUCKY ONES WERE DONE BY ME.

"THERE IS NO FUTURE WITHOUT A PAST."

APETER WATTS SCAN FOR DCR